

COST vs. COST EFFECTIVENESS



READING RECOVERY AS A SHORT-TERM INTERVENTION

Reading Recovery is a **short-term** intervention that provides individually designed and delivered lessons to grade one students who are struggling in reading and writing. The supplementary support promotes literacy skills and fosters the development of reading **and** writing. Lessons are provided daily for approximately 12 to 20 weeks, or a portion of the grade one school year.

Reading Recovery teachers receive extensive training and professional support on the design and implementation of Reading Recovery lessons, the documentation of teaching and learning, and the collection of data to track student progress and inform lesson design and delivery.

THE COST OF READING RECOVERY

"The criticism most often made of Reading Recovery is that it is too expensive and that it requires too much training. However, getting these results with the hardest to teach children leads us to conclude that the teacher training is providing the teachers with extraordinary insights and skills. It does cost money to hire and train Reading Recovery teachers but it also costs money to employ transitional grade teachers (e.g., kindergarten/grade one classes), resource room teachers, and remedial teachers too. It costs money to retain children...When you compare the success rate of Reading Recovery with other programs that keep children for years and never get them reading on grade level, Reading Recovery is a bargain."

*Cunningham, P. M., & Allington, R. L. (1994).
Classrooms that work. New York: HarperCollins, p. 225*

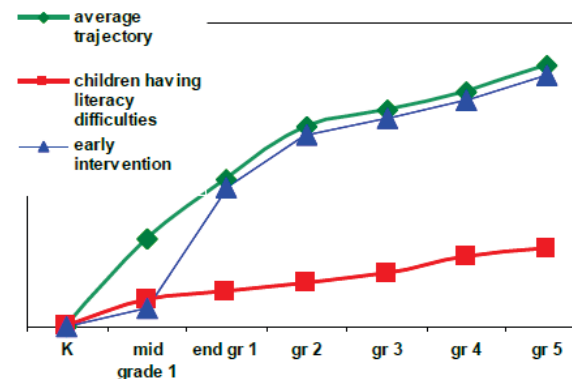
AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

In the training year, teachers receive 55 hours of in-service training by a specially trained Teacher Leader. In subsequent years the number of in-service hours is reduced to 20. In addition, in-school support is provided through visits by the Teacher Leader.

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WHY INTERVENE EARLY?

The Manitoba Centre for Health Policy estimates cost savings for the system range from \$10 to \$34 for every dollar spent on early intervention.



WHY COST-EFFECTIVENESS?

Reading Recovery is a powerful form of professional development for teachers with experience in teaching literacy in the early years of school.

Cost analysis is an applied branch of economics. It refers to a broad set of techniques used for evaluation and decision making that takes costs into account (*Levin & McEwan, 2001*). Cost-effectiveness analysis, on the other hand, involves the evaluation of alternatives according to both their costs and their effects in relation to a specific outcome (*Levin & McEwan, 2001*). Specifically, cost-effectiveness compares costs to units of program objectives (*Kee, 1994*).

The descriptions here focus on the cost-effectiveness approach because it is designed to "compare two or more alternatives with similar objectives" (*Levin & McEwan, 2001, p. 108*). This may be the most direct method of comparing educational programs in terms of costs and outcomes. An important caveat is in order. In the literature on Reading Recovery, this intervention is often compared to programs that have dissimilar goals or serve different populations. As Reading Recovery serves the lowest 20% readers, it cannot readily be compared to interventions that serve all students, as is often done; the outcome or unit of program objective is quite different. Helping a struggling emerging reader to learn to read is a different objective than helping an average student learn to read. Different costs are likely to be involved.

WHAT IS THE DESIRED OUTCOME?

A Reading Recovery teacher who works in a classroom for the other part of the day will apply their expertise not only to the 8-12 lowest achieving students but also to the 20 more children in the classroom. Professional conversations with other teachers will increase the influence of that learning exponentially.

Reading Recovery has one clear goal: to dramatically reduce the number of children in an education system moving out of grade one with reading and writing difficulties. Literacy difficulties occur for a multitude of reasons, and research has demonstrated that the most effective way to support these children is with specially trained teachers working to design and deliver individual lessons based on a learner's strengths.

Longitudinal data has demonstrated that students need to develop a robust literacy processing system that operates on tasks of sufficient difficulty so that gains will be maintained. The Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery uses the definitions below to determine the final outcome for students who conclude their lesson series. A common early literacy assessment, *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (*Clay, 2013*) is used to identify the students in greatest need of support, to determine the outcome at exit, and to monitor the students' progress.

- Reading Recovery is **supplementary to good classroom instruction**, not in place of it.
- Reading Recovery is **short term**, lasting on average 18 weeks (in Canada).
- Reading Recovery is early literacy intervention that **must be delivered every day** that school is in session.
- Reading Recovery is not necessary for every child, but is for those children who are a priority in a school system ... that is, the children who need the teacher most.

FINAL INTERVENTION CLASSIFICATIONS FOR STUDENTS IN READING AND WRITING

| | |
|---|--|
| Accelerated Progress | Concluded Lesson Series: The First Successful Outcome The lesson series is discontinued when a student is able to benefit from the classroom program without the need for supplementary individual support. |
| Recommended: Substantial or limited progress | Concluded Lesson Series: The Second Successful Outcome It is recognized early in the child's school career that some extra support will be required and it is recommended the child receive additional support in the classroom. |
| | Concluded Lesson Series: The Second Successful Outcome It has been recognized early in the child's school career that some extra literacy support will be required and thus the recommendation for longer term specialist support is made. |

COMPARISON OF COSTS*

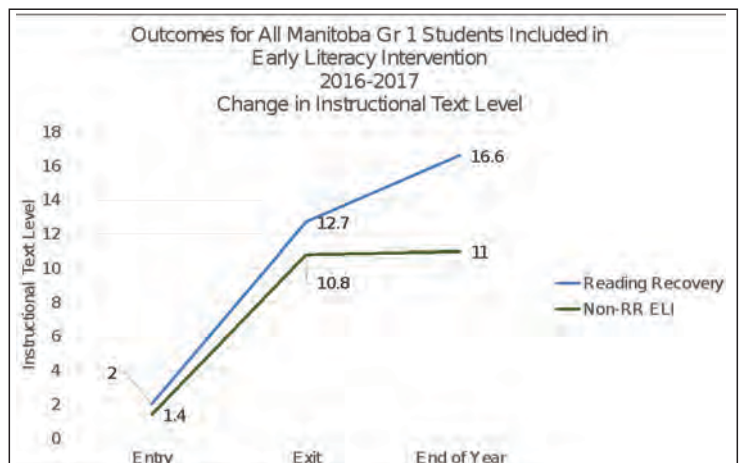
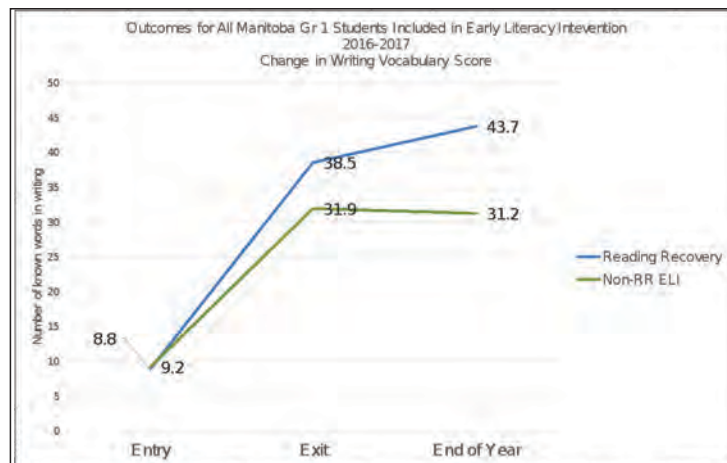
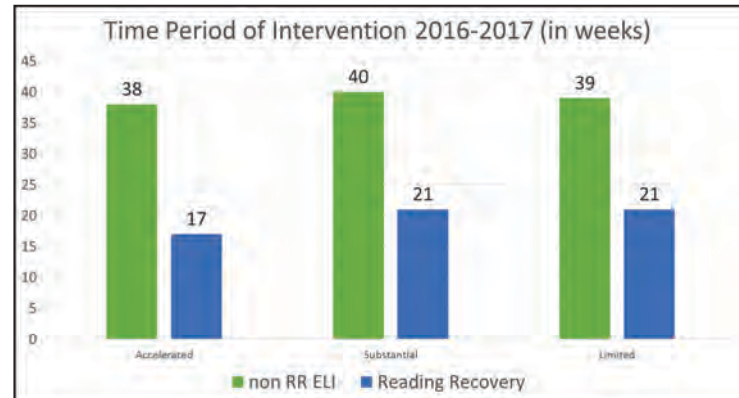
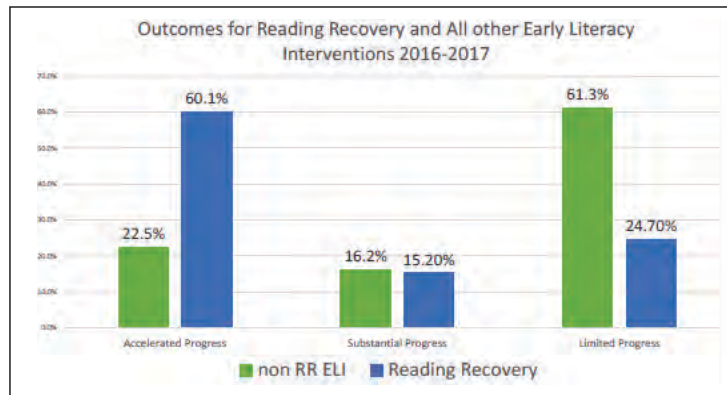
**Based on 2017-2018 estimate of Teacher Salary and Benefits
Class 5 teacher, 5-10 years of experience (\$82,435.00 to \$98,605.00) and 195 school days (1072.5 hours).
Equivalent to \$76.86 - \$91.94 per hour.*

| | Reading Recovery | Small Group | Grade Retention | Resource Support (15 min per day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Years | .48 year | 1 year | 1 year | 6+ years |
| Time equivalent | 6.8 to 10 school days over 20 weeks | 14.5 to 36.4 school days over 40 weeks | 200 school days | 53.2 days over 6 years |
| Hours | 37.5 hrs | 80-100 hrs | 1100 hrs | 292.5 hrs over 6 years |
| Outcomes expected | Reading and Writing at end of grade one level | Reading at end of grade one level | Literacy achievement in average band in the subsequent year | Support students to cope with classroom demands |
| Percentage reaching the expected outcome | 60-70% | 22.5-25% | unknown | unknown |
| Cost per student | \$2882.25-\$3447.75 | \$6917.40- \$8274.60 (cost per group of 2 or 3) | \$8272.60 | \$22,481.55 - \$26,892.45 |
| Effect Size (Hattie, 2009) | .68 | .15 | -0.16 | unknown |

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CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF READING RECOVERY

Based on data collected from implementations in 2016-2017 using *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, the following outcomes in **reading** and **writing** were noted when comparing Reading Recovery where consistent professional developments and non-Reading Recovery Early Literacy Interventions with limited or no professional development.



“ The bitterness of poor quality is remembered long after the sweetness of low price has faded from memory. — Aldo Gucci ”

Brownell M, Roos NP, Fransoo R, Guevremont A, MacWilliam L, Derksen S, Dik N, Bogdanovic B, Sirski M., (2004). How Do Educational Outcomes Vary With Socioeconomic Status? Key Findings from the Manitoba Child Health Atlas 2004. Winnipeg, MB: *Manitoba Centre for Health Policy*

Clay, M.M. ,(2013). *An observation survey of early literacy achievement 2nd edition*. Auckland, NZ: The Marie Clay Literacy Trust.

Hattie, J. A.C.,(2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kee, J.E., (1994). Benefit-cost analysis in program evaluation. In J.S. Wholey, H.P.Harry, & K.E. Newcomer (Eds.), *Handbook of practical program evaluation (pp. 456-488)*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Levin, H.M., & McEwan, P.J. (2001). *Cost-effectiveness analysis: Methods and applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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